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NO DEATH"*

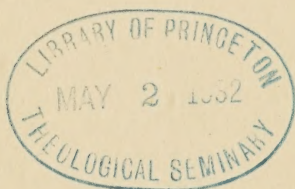


*ROBERT J. MACALPINE*

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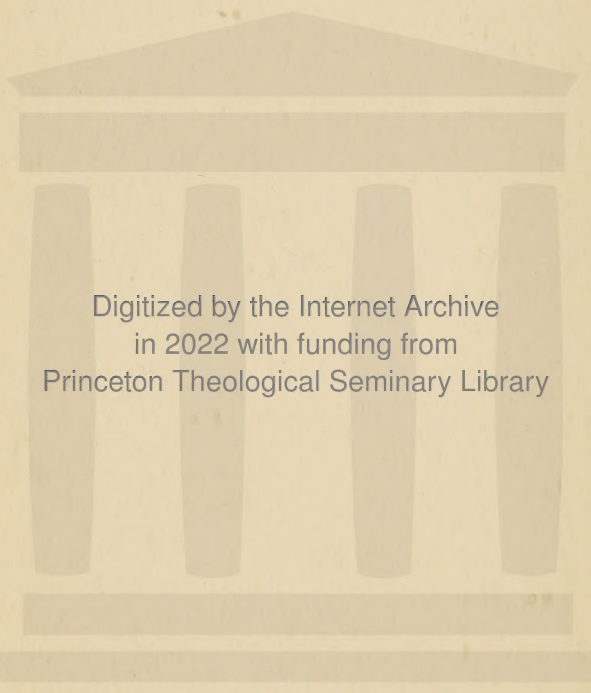


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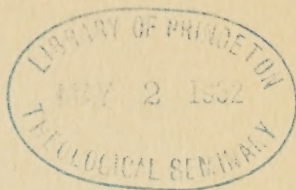
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“ THERE IS NO DEATH ”



# ✓ "There Is No Death"

*Addresses on The Life Beyond*



✓  
By

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*To the memory of  
my good Father  
and my dear son Robert  
Knox, who now know that  
there is no death*



## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

**T**HESE addresses were delivered from the pulpit of Central Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, N. Y. Most of them were broadcast. They were designed specially for the bereaved. They are published in response to many requests from various parts of the United States and Canada. Thus are they sent forth with the fervent prayer and hope that they may be of some comfort to those over whom have gathered the sorrow-filled clouds of bereavement.

R. J. M.

*Buffalo, N. Y.*



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## I

### GOD'S BLESSINGS THROUGH TROUBLE

*"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."— II CORINTHIANS 4:17.*

**W**HY we suffer is one of life's greatest problems. Perhaps it is the greatest unsolved problem the world has ever faced. It is a question all ages have asked. And it has been the one, perhaps above all, nearest to the heart of humanity since its beginning.

We have our problems, many and great. Just now, we are trying to solve the question whether we came from a monkey, or from dust, or both, or neither. And were an angel to come to earth direct from the hand of God to give us the true answer, we should be little better or worse off. We should still have the Ten Commandments and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And they would be just as binding upon us; and our responsibility to God and to each other would be just as great; and the great problems of human life would still require to be answered. There would remain for us a problem vastly greater. And that is the question, Why

must we suffer so much? Why does God allow it? Has He a purpose in doing so? And if so, what is that purpose? And how can we best deal with our sufferings? We have many problems. There is the problem of how to make a living—how to make ends meet. There is the problem of how to increase our wealth. There is the problem of how to conquer disease. But from the beginning, underneath all these, is the great problem, How can we escape trouble? And if we cannot escape it, how can we make the most of it? What should we do?

Our first thought is—how can we escape trouble? For, as one of old said: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." Then how can we get away from it? It seems so natural to flee trouble. The earliest instinct of the child is to fear trouble and to run from it. This is also true of all animal life. How the hare and the fox and the bird will run from it!

Trouble besets us on every hand. The lawyer spends two-thirds of his time adjusting legal troubles. The physician spends most of his time correcting physical troubles. The minister spends three-fourths of his time dealing with mental and moral and spiritual troubles. Therefore we ask again the question—Why so much trouble? Sooner or later, no one escapes it. It is a question, therefore, upon the lips of every person. Perhaps a quarter of a million are hearing my voice. And not

one of these but knows the meaning of trouble. It matters not whether you have health and wealth and position. Trouble slips in and is upon you, no matter what your circumstances. Solomon enjoyed all these blessings, and yet from the deep of his soul he cries, "All is vanity." And who has not asked, like Nicodemus, "How can these things be? "

As yet, we have no answer to this question. We have not discovered a solution to the problem of suffering. We have discovered every continent and river and island in the world. We have discovered the secrets of steam, power and electricity. We have invented the telegraph, the telephone, the radiophone, and a thousand other inventions. We have conquered land and sea and air. We have unlocked the secret chambers of Nature on every hand. We have discovered the mysteries that have been held in secret since the beginning of time. And yet, with all these, we have not discovered the secret of trouble.

While this is true, there are finger-posts that point us to the high-road whereupon somewhere is found the answer. We all believe the world has progressed. There is no doubt as to this. From the early beginnings of time, man has moved upward and onward physically, intellectually, industrially, politically, morally, spiritually and every other way. To verify this we have but to glance for a moment at history. We have but to study the

elementary findings of paleontology, psychology, philology and biology. However much fundamentalists and modernists may disagree as to the explanation of this progress, they thoroughly agree that great progress has been made.

And we all believe that the human race will continue to progress. Almost every hour a new discovery or a new invention is made. Every year we shall continue to grow better flowers, better grain, better stock. Every year we shall continue to make better roads, better automobiles, better machinery. Every year we shall continue to find the secret of some disease. Every year we shall continue to carry on new deeds of world-wide human betterment. We shall continue to hold world conventions, to make world leagues and covenants for the continued improvement of humanity. World peace lies not far ahead over the hills of passing years. The sunlight of permanent industrial goodwill will continue to rise upon the horizon. Leaders in various departments of human activity are telling us everywhere that to-day we are in the beginnings of a new age of human improvement over all the earth, and that it will continue into God's great To-morrow. They tell us that the world will keep on moving toward the "one far-off divine event." They give us every assurance that world forces are at work steadily perfecting the universe. That God is in His laboratory daily bringing about the day when He shall "complete the pile."

Now we ask, in the face of so much trouble, how can this progress go on? Here we come upon a mystery. In a sentence, it is this: The history of the world's advance is inseparably wrapped up with the history of trouble. The periods of greatest progress have come with the periods of greatest strife and strain. While Israel was struggling for her life, she came to her greatest life. When she sat down robed in her glory, she began to decline. When Rome was meeting her enemy on every hand, she rose to her greatest power. When she conquered the world, her struggling over, she ceased to grow. Britain's imperial democracy was born from the throes of internal strife. France came to her greatest through the sorrows of revolution. The United States came to her independence and the greatness of her unity through the pains of war.

It has been so with the Church. The greatest periods of her martyrdom and persecution have been the greatest periods of her advance. Indeed, all the great accomplishments that have crowned the history of civilization have come through struggle and strain. We have only to think of what it cost Columbus to leave behind him all that was dear and face the boundless main. And up out of the sufferings of his body and soul came forth the discovery of a continent. We have but to think of the Pilgrims who suffered beyond measure in the giving up of Home and Country and Church, in battling with storm and privation, so that within twelve

months one-half of their number were gone. And from the womb of this suffering was born a New World. We have but to go back to the day of our birth when from the pangs of suffering we were born into time. And one step more. Somehow it was not possible that the cup of suffering should pass from the Saviour of men. Somehow it was necessary that He should be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Somehow, in the economy of things, it was necessary that the iniquity of us all should be laid upon Him; that, somehow, "with His stripes we are healed"; that, somehow, in the great plan of the world's Creator "He must needs suffer"; that, somehow, in the cosmic purpose of things He must needs be *lifted up* and *crucified* for the final perfecting of man.

The blessing of trouble seems to be a law at work everywhere. In one of his splendid essays, Boreham tells us a story of the fish-pens at Lake King. A quarter of an acre of water was fenced off near the shore. Into this fish-pen the fish-catches were placed. And here they were kept for market. For many a day it was known that, somehow, the fish in these pens did not thrive. Their flesh soon became slack and soft and flabby. And therefore it was necessary often to take them to market while the price was yet anything but desirable. What was the matter? The water was of the same quality and temperature. The fish were given

plenty to eat. They were protected on every hand. Just here was the trouble. A certain fisherman discovered the secret of how to overcome the difficulty. The fish in his pens remained strong and vigorous and fit. They brought the biggest price at Billingsgate market. But not till the day of his death did he tell the secret. He kept a catfish in his fish-pen. It kept the fish in a ferment of struggle. It made *trouble* for them. And their trouble kept them firm and fresh. Why could not these fish be left in peace and still be strong and fit? We do not know. We only know that a law of progress was at work. It was the principle of *blessing through trouble*. It was this principle that Darwin came upon after twenty years of investigation. He called it "the struggle for existence." He found that everywhere with struggle came the higher organism and the higher function of the higher life.

And so, once again we ask ourselves the question—Why so much trouble? Why should we not live in quiet and rest and peace? We seem to be hounded by day and night. We are driven from pillar to post. We struggle to make a living, to make ends meet. We struggle against disease and pain. We struggle against the selfishness of man. We struggle against the evil in our own breasts. So each can say, like Paul, "When I would do good, evil is present with me; the good that I would, I do not, and the evil which I would not, that I do." In the language of the fisherman, the

catfish is in the waters of our life. Why? We do not know. But we do know that a great law of development is thus at work. We do know that somehow in the great plan of the Perfector we must have trouble. We know that the most enduring timber of the world comes from the Norway pines—trees which have withstood the winds and the storms of a hundred years. We know that with the exception of the ant, perhaps nothing living toils like the bee. And through their toil and their suffering comes the honey. We do not know why the thorn should bristle beneath the flowering rose, but we do know that up from it all there blooms the most beautiful and fragrant of all the world's flowers.

Trouble seems to be a part of the constitution of things. It seems to have a vital place in the economy of all development. It does not *happen*. It is divinely ordered. As a law of progress it takes its place beside gravitation, sunlight, rain, food, water, truth and right in the making and perfecting of human life. We know not why sunlight, rain and truth and right are required. No less do we know why trouble is required. It is one of the laws which Christ came to fulfill. And he fulfilled it to the letter. "Perfect through suffering," seems, like a golden thread, to run through all Sacred Word. The Suffering of Calvary and then the Crown of Glory.

History tells us the story over and over. Surely

no man had greater trouble than Job, yet from his suffering he came forth as gold refined in the fire. Perhaps the greatest apostle of the early Church was Paul. He explained the secret of his greatness when he said, "I have fought a good fight." We see it every day. A friend of mine, a minister, said that some time ago, after preaching in a strange pulpit, he asked his host who a certain lady was. He had been attracted to her as she sat in the pew before him. There was something angelic about her face. This was the secret: during the last six years she had lost all her family, her four children and her husband. And out of it all she came forth transformed into the likeness of the Master. My mind at once turned to the man who to me was nearer to that of an angel than anyone I have ever known. Every line of his face glistened with divinity. And why? He had seven brothers and sisters, but none of them approached him in the beauty and sublimity of soul. Here is the secret: For thirty-one years he had lain upon his back. As we read the history of the world's greatest saints and heroes, we see in the background clouds upon clouds of trouble. And when we follow John into the City of God we hear him ask, "Who are these?" And back comes the answer, "These are they that came through great tribulation [trouble] and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Sure

it is that, somehow, trouble purges, cleanses, purifies, renews, transforms, and perfects us.

So, dear heart, perhaps you are bearing some great burden. The catfish is in the wells of your heart's life. You are struggling against disease, or loss, or disappointment, or doubt, or temptation, or loneliness, or opposition of some kind—and you wonder why? Do not forget these are God's best gifts in blessed disguise. These afflictions are "working out" for you "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Do not try to find the explanation from any of the things that you see round about you. The explanation of it is found far deep in the recesses of your inner soul. There the Rewarder of all is at work unseen and silent. And one day He will show you the meaning of it and you will be filled "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Paul did not leave us our text without this assurance. For in pain, "We look not at the things which are seen," he says, "but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Jesus reminded the disciples that in this world they would have all manner of trouble. But He immediately added, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." Once more, we hear Him say to the Church at Laodicea, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am

sat down with My Father in His throne." Then remember that after the night-time of trouble dawns the day—the unending, cloudless day of glory with the King of kings. Then shall we reign with Him over empires of which this earth will be but a parish.

Take your trouble and with steadfast faith and strong resolve, make out of it your soul's priceless wealth. When the oyster is troubled with a grain of sand, he lays hold upon it and out of it makes the pearl of great price. Nobly face your trouble and grip the hand of God. And out of your trial will come forth your "Pearl of great price."

Do not forget, therefore, that the troubles you have to bear are really not a cross, but a crown. Margaret Slattery tells the story of her experience at a fire-ranger's camp out in the Rocky Mountains. The ranger had explained to her how he was constantly on the outlook for forest fires. During the night she woke with a light reflecting in her room. In great haste she hurried to tell the ranger that there was a forest fire. He looked out and then quietly turned to her and said, "That is not a forest fire; that's the morning-dawn." And so, what seems to you a loss, or perhaps a calamity, will one day prove to be the morning-dawn of your great blessed to-morrow beyond the hills of time. From the cup of Jesus' suffering came His reward. For, as Dean Inge says, "The cup of suffering and the cup of blessing . . . are they not the same

cup? " As Cowper sang when he saw the priceless meaning of his troubled years:

*"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head."*

Perhaps no trouble hangs so heavily over us as the clouds of death. And there is no truth that comes to us with greater clearness than that the troubles of death work out for us the glory of a higher and realer life. Without a doubt it was this fact that the Master had in mind when, under the shadow of His death, He said, "Let not your heart be troubled." He knew that the greatest of all blessings that can come to the lives of the good on earth is the "one clear call." He knew that after the night of death comes the dawn of the blessed, endless, cloudless day.

Then your crown! Then your "reward in heaven!" Then your "joy unspeakable!" Then your "exceeding and eternal weight of glory!" Then your prize for which every pain and tear were a thousand times worth while! If only for a moment you could see it all as Jesus sees it, that instant your clouds of trouble would vanish like the darkness before the radiant sun. Then from the deep of your now troubled heart, you would "*re-joice and be exceeding glad.*"

## II

### HOW TO VIEW DEATH

*“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”—LUKE 23:46.*

**N**EVER in the history of time has Christ reigned so universally. And never, therefore, have His life and death so borne upon our hearts.

The world has long since been interested in the purpose of Jesus' death, but it has never shown much concern as to how He died. Our text tells us how. Since the World War with its train of sorrow and pain threw the earth into upheaval, death seems to have taken on a new meaning. The art of dying seems to have become the supreme glory of living. Death seems to possess a more essential place in God's great cosmic plan. It seems to be the door through which civilization must reach its divine appointment of perfection. So the question of how to die well becomes a matter of vital importance, and the answer is found in our text.

How to die depends largely upon our conception of death. To the mind of Jesus death was not a

calamity but a blessing. "Blessed are the dead," He declared. He saw in it the progressiveness of God's purpose for men. It was to Him the culmination, the climax, of every earthly ideal and activity. It was the hour for which every other hour on earth existed. It was the door to which opened every other door of time. It belonged to the sublimest orderings of all the universe. In it, were all the laws of life fulfilled. In short, Jesus saw in death the culmination of the will of God.

How different has been the paganistic concept of men. Most pagan peoples have viewed death as a cruel monster and a calamity, to be forever feared and shunned. They have seen no reason for it. It has been entirely void of vital relationship. It has possessed no cosmic design. It belongs to no order of events; it possesses no sequence of purpose. In this respect we are yet living in primitive pre-Christian days. We have scarcely begun to grasp the mind of the Master concerning this most certain and important of all life's experiences.

I note first of all that Jesus, in dying, recognized in death the will of God. He died readily and willingly, not because He was obliged by any law of necessity to do so, but because He saw that His death belonged to the noble order of life. He saw that it made for the enlargement and enhancement of that order. It was just the same principle that animated our soldiers at the front

during the war. They died because their death was a glorious part and parcel of the victory for which they fought.

The same principle holds in everyday life. Why do I pay my debts? Why do I provide for my family? Why do I obey the law of the land? Because I must? Never. It is because paying my debts, keeping my family and obeying the law belong to the fundamental laws of all civic life. Thus do I die, not because I must, but because it is a great thing to die—because death belongs to the profoundest necessity of my ever-evolving being. It is the voice of God and I answer as does the soldier to his call of duty.

It was in this spirit that Jesus approached death. He did not *surrender* to death—He *accepted* it. He did not *submit* to death—He *adopted* it. He did not *avoid* death—He *appropriated* it. He did not *contend* with death—He entered into *partnership* with it. He did not *destroy* death—He *fulfilled* it. He did not *conquer* death—He *fathomed* it. He did not *fear* death—He *assimilated* it. In His death, the laws of nature had their fullest sway. But in those same laws of nature Jesus found the glory of His death. He appropriated them all. He commanded every one of them, so that in His death they might culminate for Him the supreme victory of His life. He made them all His attending servants even unto death. And this is just what God

intended from the first they should be to *every one* of His true law-abiding children.

I want you here to note further how Jesus approached death. It was the same approach as when He prayed at other times. Over and over again He prayed, "*Father.*" And now with that same gentle, child-like, trustful spirit, He approaches death. "*Father*"—oh, think of it—"*Father!*" What a word! What a thought!—in the face of death. He did not see before Him the darkness of the night. No; He beheld the full-orbed light of His Father's face. He did not feel Himself passing into the ruthless grip of natural laws. No; He saw Himself being lifted up into the hands of His *Father*—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He realized that death, after all, is but the blessed reality of going out into the loving arms of the Father of us all. Thus when we say, "*Father,*" the fear of death leaves us, like the mist before the rising sun. It is bigger than all our doubts and dogmas. It rolls away the stone from the tomb's great door. It tells us, in one word, the story of "better things to come"; of "a land that is fairer than day"; of the "house with many rooms"; of the "city not made with hands"; of the "robe of righteousness"; of the "rest that remaineth"; of a "joy unspeakable and full of glory"; of the "peace that passeth all understanding." When Jesus teaches us how to *pray* He tells us to say,

“Our Father.” And now with the self-same words He teaches us how to *die*.

Just here, I observe a question in your minds. You ask: “Why, then, are we told that ‘the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death’?” First of all see what is here meant by death. The same Scriptures answer us. “The wages of sin is death.” So we see that the last enemy to be destroyed is *sin*. Jesus did not destroy death as we commonly mean by the phenomenon called death. Men still die and always will, so long as the human race is formed out of dust. Moreover, Jesus did not intend that death should be destroyed. What then? He took the *poison*—the *sting*—out of death. He took out of it the thing that makes us fear it—*sin*. Listen to John the Baptist when first he catches a glimpse of Jesus. He did not exclaim, “Behold the King of kings!” He did not cry out, “Behold the world’s greatest Teacher!” He did not acclaim, “Behold the Reformer of all the ages!” No,—with one clarion note he announced, “Behold the *Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.*” With sin taken away death has lost its sting. “O death,” cries Paul, “where is thy sting?” Jesus became the anti-toxin to death. We used to dread diphtheria. Now the anti-toxin has delivered us from this age-long fear. But diphtheria has not been destroyed; only, its poison power has been removed. The re-

deeming grace of Christ has become the great anti-toxin to sin.

*"I need Thy presence every passing hour,  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?"*

Jesus did not set aside the laws of death; He freed them from the toxin of sin. He did not ignore the forces of death; He *clarified* them. He did not neglect God's purposes in death; He *liberated* them. He did not cut down the vine of death; He made it *blossom*. He did not destroy a single branch on the vine of death; He made of it a great tree of life laden with all manner of precious fruit. Ah, no—He did not destroy death; but He annihilated every last vestige of cause for fearing it. He transformed death from a skull and cross-bones into the everlasting arms of the World's Great Father—God. He did not take away the inevitable necessity of death. No—He just revealed the eternal Fatherhood and Glory of it all. "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

But, tragedy of our ignorance,—how the centuries have missed this master view of death! How the generations have groped along the dark valleys of unmitigated sorrow! For ages electricity filled Christendom with the fear of destruction. Witchcraft tortured untold multitudes of innocents, till, at last, Benjamin Franklin with his lightning-rod revealed the secret of the air—it was

electricity. And with the growth of science we are discovering that what we long feared as our deadly foe was all along one of our greatest benefactors. It only waited to be discovered and appropriated. Now it lights our homes, operates our factories, provides us transportation, brings us within speaking distance with the ends of the earth. In short it has revolutionized modern life. So, hidden beneath the bosom of death, there lies the world's greatest boon. Jesus bids us probe and find it. Then shall we view time and eternity with a new lens; then shall we interpret life in new terms; then shall the dirge of the night become the song of the morning; then shall we place new values upon the things that live on forever. Then shall we discover that every tick of life on earth is but the winging of our flight towards the hands of the Father of us all. Then shall we see that what long has been the dread of the ages, is the greatest hidden glory.

Jesus thus dispels this ignorance and shows us how to view death and approach it and enter it. Not as an adversary, but as a *friend*; not as misfortune, but as *fortune*; not as loss, but as *gain*; not as something to avoid, but something to *secure*; not as something to fear, but something to *embrace*; not as a journey into the night, but as a step out into the *morning*, into the Father's house—into the Father's arms. That's why Jesus said—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

That's why Paul said, he had "a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." That's why the poet sang:

*"I know not where the islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His Love and care."*

Death thus becomes a moral issue. It is not a question of, *must* I die, so much as, *How* shall I die? What is my attitude towards it? For as we have seen, death is not so much a physical necessity, as it is a moral obligation. It is not a natural phenomenon, so much as it is a spiritual responsibility. Am I ready to undertake it? Do I approach it as I would any other moral and spiritual duty? Do I deal with it as I do the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount? Does it impel my daily life as the regnant will of God that I should die well? That when death comes into my life I should deal with it as victor rather than as vanquished? That I should appropriate it rather than suffer it? In brief, do I regard death as an unseen master wheel whose silent turning brings me the best God can possibly produce? Changing the metaphor, is it not but the ripening of the soul's fruit? A growth. Think of it, in the midst of life, we are all the while growing death.

Life is the blossom; death is the fruit. Death

lies hidden in the bosom of life. All life is potentially death. All life on earth is but the opening of the blade and the ripening of the grain. At death we reap the fruit of it all. Thus sowing death, we reap the fullness of life.

This brings us to the point of asking, how are we growing this greatest of all fruits? There is no question about the reason why in death Jesus was able to say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." It was this self-same attitude of soul He had maintained all through His daily life. As early as at twelve years of age did He not say, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Dying was still His Father's business. Again, amid His daily duties He said, "My meat and My drink is to do the will of Him that sent Me." And dying was still His meat and drink—the will of Him that gave Him earthly life. It was still His Father's business and His very meat and drink to die when the Father's hour of death for Him arrived. Yes,—there is no business in life so great and so heroic as dying.

But men do not die at a certain moment and place. No. Death is not an act, it is a *process*. As someone put it long ago, "As soon as we begin to live, we begin to die." From the beginning, the womb of life is pregnant with the vitalities of death. Our pain and sorrow are but the birth-pangs of a new and higher life, which men, for lack of a better word, call death.

Strangely thus do men speak of death as a punishment or discipline to those left behind. It is neither. It is but the process of life taking its course. Men die as they live, regardless of those left behind, just as wheat grows wheat and thistle-seed grows thistles regardless of all who have to do with it. Hence, how we are to die need not concern us, if each passing day we are but living as we ought. The mechanic who works well will finish his product well. The soldier who fights well will die well. So the man who lives well will die well. The man who lives like Christ will die like Him. You can't live a sinner to-day and expect to die like a saint to-morrow. Saints are not bred from sinners. We must line up our lives with the heart and will of God. God must become to us a Father. We must view all men as brothers. Death is the fulfillment of all earthly law, physical and moral and spiritual. But Jesus tells us to love God with all our being and our neighbour as ourselves, for thereon hang all the law and the prophets. Measure the moral features of Jesus and you have those of the Father. For said He, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." If you want to arrive at the supreme glory of death, you must measure up to the Father's will with the Master's Spirit. *Possess the mind of Jesus, and then death will become to you the outstretched arms of the Father, and all life on earth will be but the foregleam of that blessed ever approaching hour.*

We, therefore, must see death in its larger cosmic purpose. We must see that there is no death. That it is just another word for victory. We must see in it a world being redeemed unto God and the Prince of Peace. We must discern the link death occupies in the chain of God's vast plans for the perfected life of His earthly family.

Do your best and then, like the Master, commit yourself into the hands of the Father. Like true soldiers 'mid shot and shell, endure your best, fight your best, then commit yourselves into the hands of the Father. That is what Jesus did. He had not where to lay His head, yet He struggled on amid foes on every hand. He faced betrayal, an unjust court, a dark garden and a cruel cross. He endured them, and having finished His work and done His best, He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." To you, brave sons of earth, He says, "Follow Me and I will show you both how to live and how to die." And to you, dear soul at home in the shades of death,—just do your very best—trust all you can—endure all you can—and then commend yourself into the hands of the Father. That's the Master's way—let it be your way too. And to all whose hearts are heavy, just trust the triumphant love of Christ—just fight the good fight of faith, run well your course, follow the Master's footsteps close, and then, like Him, commend yourself into the Father's

hands. Therein is found the master key that unlocks every door in God's great House.

The world never needed this twofold recipe more so than now—*doing your best and calmly leaving the outcome in the hands of the Father.* It was this that gave to Jesus the final victory. It is this that has paved the upward way of civilization. It is this that wins in death, and all other struggles for the Kingdom of Heaven. It is this that will wipe away all tears and bind up all broken hearts. Think of it, Jesus had just said, "It is finished." And only then could He say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." So is it with us, we can never die till our work is finished; as David Livingstone said while in the shadow of death, "I am immortal till my work is done." And our work is never finished till we have done our best. He never fails who does his best. In the eyes of God our work is always successfully done when we have done our best. Then the Father's outstretched arms will await us and we shall die in the peace, in the comfort, and in the triumph of the Master of all life and death. And in His blessed death we shall find that after all *there is no death.*

### III

## WHY WE ARE SURE THERE IS A LIFE HEREAFTER

*"If a man die, shall he live again?"—JOB  
14:14.*

**T**HE question asked in this text is as old as the human race. It always has been asked, and it always will be asked. It has never been absolutely answered, and possibly never will be on this earth. The question is deeply written in every human soul. And, somehow, at the bottom of our hearts we shall never rest till we find some sort of answer that satisfies. Many answers have been given, but few satisfy. Plato asked:

*"Whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing for immortality?"*

And perhaps nothing is truer than the answer he gave to the waiting world:

*"'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;  
'Tis heaven itself, that points out the hereafter  
And intimates eternity to man."*

Catching up a similar thought, Longfellow sang:

*"And in the wreck of noble lives  
Something immortal still survives."*

No soul has ever returned to tell us whether there be a future world. Not a whisper to tell the story of what takes place when we leave behind us the things of time. If, for one moment, some one were to return, a world of truth would be revealed, and this old earth never would be the same again. It seems to me that the revelation of such a moment would in a night transform the universe. Perhaps Tennyson had this in mind when he wrote:

*"Ah, Christ, if it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell us  
Where and what they be."*

However, there are many finger-posts that point toward the goal of immortality. There is the finger-post of our deepest *intuition*. Somehow, far below the category of reason there comes a voice from the deep of the human soul that whispers, "If a man die, he *shall* live again." No matter what the doubt, this voice speaks louder than all else. There is the sceptic who in the moment of his prosperity says within himself, "There is no hereafter." But one day some dear one of his home is taken from him. And at the mouth of the open grave his logic that said "there is no

hereafter" has gone to the winds, and his deeper intuition cries, "I shall surely meet my darling one again!" There may have been these doubts in the mind of the great naturalist, Thomas Huxley, but it is said of him that a few days after the body of his precious child was laid away he wrote to Charles Kingsley: "As I stood beside the coffin of my little son the other day with mind bent on anything but disputation the . . . minister read . . . 'If the dead rise not again, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' I cannot tell you how inexpressibly this shocked me . . . Why, the very apes know better."

Another finger-post that points to a future life is the question of *achievement*. Man's reason asks, "How is it possible that all the achievements of the ages should in a moment be snuffed out like a candle forever. It has taken millions of years to bring man to the high state of wondrous faculty that he now possesses. How, then, could it be possible that in a moment this greatest achievement of the ages should be snuffed out forever?" It seems impossible to conceive it.

Another finger-post is the call for *future justice and reward*. If there be no future life, then unnumbered injustices have been committed upon the sons of men, for which there never will be the slightest recourse. Numberless sacrifices will go unrecognized. The one hundred thousand innocent women slain in the days of witchcraft will go

unrewarded. The fifty million martyrs who since the birth of Christ gave their lives for truth and liberty will go forever uncompensated. The debt we owe the noble heroes who gave their blood in ten thousand wars will go forever unpaid. In all the light of reason, this surely cannot be so. These must be rewarded somewhere in the Great Beyond. If not, then in the words of one of our great writers: "Considering the immense and protracted sorrows of mankind, it would have been better if the earth had remained like a moon, a mass of slag, idle and without a tenant." It would thus seem to us the poet was right when he sang concerning the death of the Duke of Wellington:

*"We doubt not that for one so true,  
There must be other noble work to do  
Than when he fought at Waterloo."*

Another finger-post that points to a hereafter is that of *moral necessity*. What would become of this world to-morrow if men everywhere believed no more in the hereafter. The answer is not far to find. Paul declared, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." In other words, let us enjoy ourselves to the full at whatever cost to-day, for it will make no difference to-morrow, for there really is no to-morrow.

Martin Luther spoke out in no uncertain terms when he said: "If you believe in no future life, I would not give a mushroom for your God. Do,

then, as you like! For if no God, so no devil and no hell. . . . Then plunge into . . . rascality, robbery and murder."

Well do I remember the celebrated Goldwin Smith. He was the arch-sceptic of my college days. He openly denied a Future Life. And yet in an essay published in the *North American Review* (1904) he frankly expressed his fear that should people everywhere believe that there were no immortality the very soul of public-mindedness would die, and that the very roots of democracy would perish. Thus immortality is a moral necessity.

The difficulty with most people who doubt the Future Life is that they are going altogether on what their *senses* reveal. They are banking entirely on physical appearances. They see a child grow to manhood, and on to old age with all its infirmity, and finally go down to the grave. And it seems from all appearances that is the end. They do not remember that the least of all reality is found in appearances and that appearances are at best most deceiving. In the autumn we see the leaves falling and soon the tree is bare. To every appearance it is dead. To every appearance the leaves are dead. But wait. With the coming of the spring the tree bursts forth in all the glory of its hidden life. The unnumbered leaves that seemed dead are caught up into numberless new forms of blossom and beauty.

The earth looks as if it were flat. And for ages men believed that it was so. For, to all appearances it is flat. But, in fact, it is round. To all appearances the earth is standing still. But, in fact, it is moving more than a thousand miles a minute. The sun looks as if it rises in the east, moves across the sky and sets in the west. But it does not. We put a stick in the water. To all appearances it is crooked. But it is not. Go into a room painted white. Put before one of your eyes a blue glass and before the other a yellow glass. You will see everything green. But it isn't. It is still white. You will sense everything green, but in fact everything is white. A few years ago a seed was taken from a Roman ruin. It had been buried nearly two thousand years. To all appearances it was dead. But soon after it was planted and exposed to light and warmth, something within it, which no man knows, burst from its dead prison and became a flower of beauty and fragrance.

No; appearances form no argument whatever against believing in a Future Life. Scientists are among the first to acknowledge this. John Fiske, foremost among American evolutionists, declared, "The . . . assumption that the life of the soul ends with the life of the body, is perhaps the most colossal instance of baseless assumption that is known to the history of philosophy."

With all obstructions removed, let us then fol-

low the direction in which these finger-posts point. That is what the leaders of civilization have done. And as a result, we are in the glory of modern discovery. Newton saw an apple falling to the ground, and followed it till he discovered the great law of *gravitation*. James Watt followed the steam bursting from his kettle, and it led to the discovery of *steam power*. Benjamin Franklin followed the spark from the air on the banks of the Schuylkill, and finally discovered *electricity*. Graham Bell followed the sound that he heard over a wire, and soon after invented the *telephone*. Marconi followed metered sounds across a little space, and to-day we have the radiograph.

So, let us follow the finger-posts that point us to a Future Life. This is the practical thing to do. It is what most of the great men of the ages have done and they discovered immortality. It was what Plato, the greatest mind in Greece, did. It was what Kant, the greatest philosopher of modern times, did. It was what Augustine and Shakespeare and Browning, and the other greatest minds of Europe did. It was what Washington and Edwards and Emerson, and the greatest minds of America ever since have done. It was what the prophets and the apostles did. And, most of all, it was what Jesus did, the greatest of all minds of all ages.

"Then, if a man die shall he live again?" Thus far, our answer is "We do not know," but

we do know that every wind blows that way. That every highway leads that way. That every finger-post points that way. And so one of our great modern poets, following in this direction, writes:

*“There is no death, there are no dead,  
From zone to zone, from sphere to sphere.  
The souls of all who pass from here  
Along eternal paths are led.  
Across unatlated worlds of space  
Each journeys to his rightful place.  
For, greater truth no man has said,  
There is no death, there are no dead.”*

Thus far, it seems to us at least a probability that there is a Future Life. To many enthusiasts, this is all they wish. With this probability they are satisfied. But to others, such a possibility, or even a probability, of a Future Life is not satisfying. They demand something more positive. They tell us that too much is at stake to risk their eternity on a mere probability. So they want more solid ground on which to rest. Ground on which they can begin to live and practice now for a great Endless Day that is to come.

This sure ground some find in spiritualism. To this number belong minds no less than Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. They point out to us how Jesus appeared to His disciples after His death, and how Moses and Isaiah appeared to Jesus and His disciples at

the transfiguration. And they tell us that beyond a doubt they have communed with the departed.

Many who are not spiritualists are satisfied with the mere statements of the *Bible* that there is a hereafter. They claim that the *Bible* clearly teaches it, and that our creeds distinctly express it.

But to many this is not satisfying. They want something more than the authority of a book or a creed. I am quite ready to accept the doctrine of immortality because it is taught in the Scriptures. But I well remember when as a lad I listened to the minister preaching about the hereafter. And, after he was through proving from the *Bible* what he believed, I asked myself the question, "What if the *Bible* isn't true?" So, ever since that time, I have found myself delving into the facts of the universe to prove that the *Bible* is true. Indeed we find the sacred word saying, "Have a reason for the hope that is in you." It is just that reason that I want to find and that multitudes of others want. And this reason we find abundantly supplied in the facts of observation and experience in the universe about us. In my college days one of our professors frequently said to us, "The *Bible* is all the truth you need. Keep within its covers. You need nothing beyond it. And if a man denies the *Bible*, talk no longer with him." But that day is past. We hold the *Bible* more than ever to be the word of God. But we hold that God is also revealing Himself in the

great handiwork of His universe. So, let us look at His universe to see whether we may not find there as well a most conclusive evidence that there is a hereafter.

First of all, let us note that *the universe throughout is ordered, uniform and law-abiding*. That the same laws hold from beginning to end. And let us also observe that while this is true, we cannot actually prove that it is true. We only find that it holds true where we find any part of the universe at work. This means that all natural science is based on *faith* in what seems to be a positive certainty. Scientists everywhere agree that while they have no apodictic certainty that rational law and order reigns in the universe, they have every positive faith and assurance that it does. We hear the great English scientist, Thomas Huxley, saying: "That the cosmic order is rational, and the *faith* that, throughout all duration, unbroken order has reigned in the universe, I not only accept it, but I am disposed to think it the most important of all truths."

For example, take gravitation. Science holds that it is a force that always attracts masses according to a definite law. But we cannot prove that this is true. We can only prove that it holds wherever masses have been seen to come into certain relations each to the other. And yet, we accept it as an actual, positive law of the universe. It is largely a matter of *faith* based upon observed

facts. No one *knew* there was to be an eclipse of the sun last year, but we all believed that it would take place. And we believed this because we believed in the uniformity and continuity of the laws of nature. And therefore we believed beyond a doubt that the moon would intercept the sun at a certain moment in this part of the world, as it did one hundred and nineteen years before. And with the same *faith* we *believe* that after a like period it will do so again. We have seen the elements act in obedience to certain chemical forces. Under similar circumstances they have always acted thus so far as we have observed. We do not know that they always will act thus. But beyond a doubt we believe that they will. So in the world of nature about us our knowledge is built up on well-founded abiding faith. And each particular faith rests upon the broader and deeper belief that all the universe is built upon and conditioned by a *mental* order at once rational and intelligent throughout.

It is only a step further to say that *a doctrine necessary to interpret and account for the intelligence, rationale and ordered totality of the universe must be held as true*. Charles Darwin declared that "if we consider the whole universe, the mind refuses to look at it as the outcome of chance." This means the universe was conceived and created according to an ordered intelligence. It has at its basis an intelligent purpose and an intelligent means for realizing that purpose. Look-

ing at the one hundred and fifty parts in my watch, I see nothing in each part by itself to indicate any particular plan or mentality behind it. But when I look at the parts as they are fitted one into the other, and as I see the hands following the sun across the sky, I am bound to conclude that an intelligent maker designed and made the watch. I have no discretion; I am bound to believe it. Every turn in the pathway of my mentality demands it.

So it is with the *world*. A great mental process has been at work carrying out a vast intelligent plan. The onward and upward march of civilization has been but the discovery of this plan. It has been but the finding out of the mind of the Creator. So, as Kepler looks through his telescope, he cries, "O God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee." Down the ages every inventor or discoverer has been but the pathfinder who has somehow found out a bit of God's blue-print. He has but discovered a bit of God's mind that undergirds and permeates the universe. That is why every true preacher or teacher gives but a glimpse of the mind of God, as it manifests itself in and through the souls of men. That is why President Coolidge in his Inaugural Address declared that the fundamental need of these United States was a spiritual one. What was this but to say that our greatest need is to know the mind of God and to follow it. For therein lie our security, our progress and our

destiny. That's why the President closed his memorable address with the fitting climax that the greatest concern of the American people must be not to please ourselves, or others, but Almighty God. Underneath all this is the assumption that all doctrines are true which fit in with and are necessary for the maintenance of the intelligent order and progress of the world.

Science, therefore, starts with the assumption that the universe is rationally founded and sustained and that all beliefs are true which are necessary to interpret and maintain this intelligent orderliness. For example, the doctrine of evolution is necessary, says science. Therefore, it is held as scientifically true. Likewise the doctrine of gravitation. Likewise the doctrine of the conservation of energy, and likewise every other scientific doctrine. But not one of these doctrines can be absolutely and mathematically proved. Every one of them is a declaration of *faith* based upon observed phenomena, because such doctrines are found necessary to fit in with and sustain the intelligent order of the universe. Natural science, therefore, must and does go beyond the facts it observes, just as in the doctrines of morals and religion. To quote again, Huxley wrote: "He who does not go beyond the facts will seldom get as far as the facts." Was it not the great sceptic scientist, Haeckel, who declared, "Scientific *faith* fills the gaps in our knowledge of natural laws with

temporary hypothesis." So natural science is built up on faith, as Tennyson put it, "Believing where we cannot prove."

Exactly so is it with *Religion*. The existence of God and the existence of a Future Life we cannot prove. But God and a Future Life are as necessary to explain and maintain the rational order of the universe as are Gravitation or the Conservation of Energy. Take away God and the Future Life and the scientific orderliness of the world falls to pieces. J. Arthur Thomson, the world renowned scientist, says that in the last analysis in all scientific research we must finally fall back on God. So is it with immortality. Without immortality there is little explanation to the moral order of the universe. As Gravitation is necessary to explain the ordered course of the stars and planets, it is regarded as scientifically true. In like manner belief in the future life is absolutely necessary to account for the moral basis and purpose of the universe. It is, therefore, scientifically true. I am, therefore, just as sure there is a hereafter as that there is a law of gravitation. For this reason I am just as sure that I am going to live again, after I leave this world, as I am sure that the morning dawn will break again to-morrow and that in a little more than another century the moon will again eclipse the sun in this part of the world.

So we are bound to accept a Hereafter to ex-

plain the *Present*. That is why the Bible takes it for granted as a primary and necessary truth. So we hear the psalmist in his prayer, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness." And centuries later we hear the great apostle to the Gentiles crying out to the world, "This corruptible *must* put on incorruption." In other words, man, to complete his *Present* Life, *must* go on to a *Future* Life. Every fibre of his being declares this necessity of his immortality. And in these later days natural science has become so charged with this mental, moral and spiritual necessity it also cries aloud with the apostle, "This mortal *must* put on immortality." Every star, every flower, every grain of wheat, every running brook, every atom spells this necessity in letters as large as the universe itself. It is so basic to all human destiny that Jesus seemed to regard it as axiomatic. For we hear Him say, "In My Father's house are many rooms: if it were not so I would have told you." To Him it was so axiomatic and self-evident that He did not deem it necessary even to declare it.

And yet we cannot prove with mathematical certainty that there is a Future Life. Neither can science so prove any of its doctrines. But it is sufficient to know that belief in a Future Life is just as necessary to maintain the intelligent order of the world as a belief in any of the scientific doctrines. For this reason the doctrine of immortal-

ity is scientifically true. For only in it can the rationale of the present life be understood. And as in science it is a faith based on facts of observation. As the President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology once declared, "Science is grounded on faith as is religion." And, as wrote one of the keenest scientific minds of modern days, "By the same processes that we declare the truth about all stars and rocks and flowers, so do we declare the truth of immortality."

We may not know *where* the Future Life is or *what* it is. But we do know *that* it is. We are sure of that. A traveller in Switzerland once asked a boy the way to Kandersteg. The boy did not know, but he gave an answer that exactly fits our thought. He replied, "I do not know, sir, where Kandersteg is, but there is the road to it." You ask me where the Hereafter is, and I answer you, "I do not know, sir, where the Hereafter is, but there is the road to it." This was practically the answer that Immanuel Kant made. He declared that all the categories of human thinking required that there be a future world, and that without it all mental processes are incomplete. He and a thousand other philosophers have therefore regarded the doctrine of immortality as philosophically true. Jesus looked upon death as but one of the higher processes of nature. You remember how, with almost rebuke He said to doubting minds, "Except a grain of wheat fall

into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." To Him death was but change into a form of larger, fuller life. To Him the Future Life held the consummation, the goal, of all the processes of human development begun on earth. To Him man was not made to die, but to live ever "more abundantly." So sang Tennyson:

*"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;  
Thou madest man, he knows not why,  
He thinks he was not made to die;  
And thou hast made him: thou art just."*

Yes, God has a return schedule for every one of us. We are here but "for a little while." And then back again to Him who for a day gave us to the earth. As Edgar A. Guest chanted about James Whitcomb Riley, when the great poet of childhood passed into his future life:

*"The world was gettin' dreary, there was too much  
sigh and frown  
In this vale o' mortal strivin', so God sent Jim Riley  
down,  
An' he said: 'Go there an' cheer 'em in a good old-  
fashioned way,  
With your songs of tender sweetness: but don't make  
your plans to stay,  
Coz you're needed up in Heaven. I am lendin' you to  
men  
Just to help 'em with your music, but I'll want you  
back again."*

Jesus saw that the human soul could never be complete till it realized its immortality. And this is the way science has reasoned and made its great discoveries down the ages. You will recall perhaps that in the study of the heavens scientists discovered certain irregularities in the orbit of Uranus. They could see no cause for it. But the disturbance was there. They knew there must be some cause for it. Le Verrier declared there must be a planet to account for it, and that the planet must be of a certain size and in a certain position. He was sure the planet was there, though he never saw it. But everything pointed that way. Following this lead he finally discovered Neptune, almost the exact size and position as he had believed. The same is true of Halley's comet. By the same hypothesis, and following similar finger points, Halley discovered the comet that bears his name. So is it with all atoms. No one has ever seen an atom, but everything points to a certainty that there are atoms. And no one has seen electrons and protons, but with a certainty every indication points to their existence. So do we base upon these our ultimate theories of matter and energy. Electrons and protons *must* exist to account for certain phenomena in the order of the material universe. Without them there would be no explanation to several aspects of matter and energy. So scientific belief in their existence is clearly necessary.

So in the soul there is at times a deep disturbance—a far call, a sorrow cry, a mystic phenomenon, that only *immortality* can explain:

*“A solemn murmur in its soul  
Tells of the world to be,  
As travelers hear the billows roll,  
Before they reach the sea.”*

Ah yes, some would go further and say that we even catch a glimpse of that far ocean tide within the human soul. And so Wordsworth sang,

*“Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither.”*

And so, as from step to step we follow all along the winding way of thought, we find ourselves utterly unable to believe for even a moment that if a man die he shall not live again. Even Charles Darwin declares: “It is an intolerable thought that man and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation, after such long continued slow progress.” Thus, to say that man shall not live again is an “intolerable thought.” It must be ruled out of order. For by all that is necessary to faith and reason “*this mortal must put on immortality.*”

This is why Jesus never recognized death. When He went into the presence of the young maiden, He said, “She is not dead.” This is why

Paul did not speak of dying but of desiring "to depart and be with Christ." That is why Longfellow, our keen-visioned poet, sang,

*"There is no death—what seems so is transition."*

That is why Socrates, that great sage of ancient Greece, vowed that, "Beyond question the soul is immortal and imperishable and will truly exist in another world."

*Then what of our Hereafter?* What is it to be? Largely, in a word, it will be what we are now making it. For each man has already entered into his immortality. Every moment we are putting on our immortality. One of the world's great painters was once asked why he was painting with such care. From his lips fell the pregnant answer, "I am painting for Eternity." Every hour of our to-day and to-morrow is struck through with eternity. Every act is laden with immortality. On every page of time we are writing the volume of our ageless future. So, then, act well thy brief to-day, for in its every moment thou dost face the endless to-morrow and thine immortal self. Then with the Psalmist let us ever pray: "Search me, O God, and try me, and see whether there be any wicked way in me, and lead me into the way everlasting."

## IV

### WHY THERE MUST BE A HEREAFTER

*"He is not here: for He is risen."*—MATTHEW 28:6.

SOME day, some of you may read in the newspapers that "Dr. MacAlpine is dead." But the statement will not be true and you may just say of me then, as the angel said of Jesus,—*"He is not here; for He is risen."* And, if any one asks you to prove your statement, just ask him to prove to you that two plus two equals four, or that one plus one equals two. No one has ever yet been able to prove this. Still we go on building up our mathematics and finances upon the belief that these propositions are true. Or tell him to prove to you that atoms or electrons or matter itself exist. If he can do one of these, he will be the first man that ever did it. Yet all the while we are building up our sciences, and indeed all earthly life itself, on the belief that these things do actually exist. And so you can take him along the entire line of knowledge. All he can truthfully say is that everything points to the truth of these propositions.

Of course, neither can you prove to your friend

that I shall still be alive. But to your doubting neighbour you can say that everything points to the truth of your contention that I am still living. And he has no counter argument.

Tell him that the *Bible*, when followed, has always led the human race into the ways of success. That wherever it has been unheeded, men have failed. That it has withstood the storms of the ages, while peoples and empires have flourished and passed into oblivion. And what says this unfailing guide to life about living hereafter? Here are some of its declarations:

*"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that . . . after my skin worms destroy this body, yet . . . shall I see God."*

*"God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for He shall receive me."*

*"Thy dead men live, together . . . shall they rise."*

*"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame."*

*"I will redeem them from death . . . O grave, I will be thy destruction."*

*"Jesus answered . . . in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage."*

*"The graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints that slept arose."*

*"Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."*

"Jesus said unto her, 'I am the Resurrection, and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.'"

"And I will raise him up at the last day."

"So also is the resurrection of the dead . . . it is sown a natural body; and it is raised a spiritual body."

And so we might go on for an hour quoting the Scriptures concerning the fact of a future life. It runs like a golden chord from *Genesis* to *Revelation*.

But not only is the Bible full of the resurrection, it occupies a foremost place in the minds of the great writers of *literature*. Here are just a few of them:

In one of his *Sonnets*, Matthew Arnold says:

"No, No. The energy of life may be  
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;  
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,  
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,  
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life."

In his *Resignation* Longfellow wrote:

"Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives, whom we call dead."

In his *Mary Marston* George MacDonald declared, what has been deep-seated in the breast of man ever since first he placed his foot upon this earth:

*"I came from God, and I'm going back to God,  
and I won't have any gaps of death in the middle of  
my life."*

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton sang:

*"They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet  
Quaff immortality and joy."*

You recall those touching lines of Tennyson in  
*Maud*—

*"Ah, Christ, that it were possible,  
In one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell us  
What and where they be."*

And Wordsworth's vivid picture:

*"Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither."*

A thousand more we might quote.

And not only have Christian people thus believed in a future life. It has been the *faith of all races*, peoples, and tongues since the first dawn of human life on earth. Listen to that greatest poet of ancient Greece in his *Iliad*—

*"'Tis true; 'tis certain; man though dead retains  
Part of himself; the immortal mind remains."*

*Modern Archeology* has unearthed for us abundant evidence of this universal belief that there is

a life beyond. In the British Museum I looked into a sarcophagus nearly four thousand years old. It contained a well-preserved body, while its finger pointed to inscriptions on the wall. These were records of the good deeds done by the person while on this earth. And this person was thus represented as showing the divinities of the future life his grounds for reward. As far back as the primitive Neoliths, we see ornaments, weapons, tools and food buried with the dead, for their use, when they awoke at some future resurrection.

This belief, of course, took on various forms. One of the most prevalent of these was the belief that death was but a long sleep. And that sometime in the far-distant future man would rise from it. This prevailed in Greece: so do we have our word "cemetery," which is a pure Greek word meaning "sleeping-place." The ancient Egyptians seemed to have held the same belief. And so we find gorgeous tombs in which their kings and great men were laid to "sleep." There they were surrounded with all they would need when they "awoke" from their long sleep. King Tut was likely one of them. No one knows from what human root our American Indians have come. But their pagan custom was to provide for their dead. Many an Indian mound did I see when I was a lad. And when these were opened they contained the bones of the deceased, a pipe, tobacco, matches,

a tomahawk, and other utensils, ready for him when he awoke in his happy hunting ground.

So do we see this belief covering the earth, India, Persia, Babylonia, Assyria, the Iranians, the yellow peoples of China and Japan, the black races of Africa—all building their hopes on a hereafter.

And why? Why has all mankind believed in a future life? No one knows. The answer is *found down in the deep of every soul*. There it lies beyond the ken of mortal reason. No logic can fathom it. It belongs to the intuition of the soul. There, says Henri Bergson, lies the reality of all human life—down in the fathomless deep of a man's intuition. I don't know why I should be honest, or why I should tell the truth. But something beyond all reasoning tells me and everyone else that we should and must be honest and truthful. Just so something down in the transcendent deep of my soul and every other soul tells us, "*There is a life beyond.*"

And the world can't get away from it. It seems to be so vital that it is *axiomatic and foundational to all human life*, to such an extent that it cannot be explained or proven. There it is, the deepest and highest and broadest fact that should shape and colour every act we do on earth.

Did I say a fact? Yes. Well, what is a fact? It is a condition that we are forced from circumstances to accept as true. That's all we can say

about any fact. So is it regarding immortality. We are forced to accept it. Some force within compels us so to do. Every argument lands us at the gateway of a future life.

Take the argument of *Being*. Metaphysicians cannot account for the simple element of experience without a life hereafter. Kant proved that conclusively. Scientists the same. Read them all the way from Alger's *Doctrine of a Future Life* to Elbe's *Future Life in the Light of Ancient Wisdom and Modern Science*. And here is their summary—"That man will live forever in other forms of physical organization and of consciousness may therefore be regarded as exceedingly probable."

What a change. Yes—there was a day when *natural scientists* were busy trying to prove there was no God and no hereafter. But to-day they are busy trying to prove to us there must be a God and a World Beyond. What a galaxy of them there are: Drummond, Lodge, Flammarion, Sir J. J. Thomson, Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, and a thousand others.

Then there is the argument of desire and its supply. With one hand on this earth my other hand reaches out and touches a world to come. And I cannot help doing it. Why? Well—it is the principle that I see everywhere on earth—that where there is a hook, there is an eye; that where I see a wheel with cogs in it, I am sure there is a wheel somewhere that fits into it; I am hungry,

and food is provided to satisfy my hunger; I long for love, and it too is provided through my dear ones; I crave rest, and sweet sleep brings it to me; I love harmony, and music fills my breast. And, so on, all the way through life—a want, a longing, is felt, and it is supplied. So has the world all down the ages wanted and longed for immortality. The breaking heart of that mother at the open grave yearns to meet again her precious child. Will her yearning heart be satisfied some day? All nature and all reason answers "Yes." Addison in his *Cato* answered for every throbbing heart—

*"It must be so—Plato, thou reasonest well!  
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after immortality?"*

\* \* \* \* \*

*'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;  
'Tis heaven itself, that points out an hereafter,  
And intimates eternity to man."*

Further, common justice and order call for a future life. Every day we see the faithful wronged. We see right trampled under foot. We see the just ill-treated. We see the innocent suffer for the guilty. We see the weak fall, crushed by the burden for which they were not in the least responsible. And we cry out, "*In the name of all that is fair and true, there must be a world beyond, where all wrongs will be righted and where all*

faithfulness will be rewarded." If there isn't, then all reason, all sense of right, count for naught. And there can be no God. If there is, he is a cruel monster. And law and order, truth and right, have no place in the universe of men. And all life is but a dream, and things are not what they seem. As breathed a soldier in the World War:

*"If it be all for naught, for nothingness  
At last, why does God make the world so fair?  
Why spill this golden splendour out across  
The western hills, and light the silver lamps  
Of eve? Why give me eyes to see, and soul  
To love so strong and deep? Then, with a pang  
This brightness stabs me through, and wakes within  
Rebellious voice to cry against all death?  
Why set this hunger for eternity  
To gnaw my heart-string through, if death ends all?  
If death ends life, then evil must be good,  
Wrong must be right, and beauty ugliness.  
God is a Judas who betrays His Son,  
And with a kiss, damns all the world to hell,  
If Christ rose not again.*

Thus are we compelled to accept immortality as *one of the most necessary facts of all the Universe*. It is one of the cornerstones of human nature. It is one of the axioms on which religion was built. It holds the key to the final goal and meaning of human existence on earth. That's

why the angel said, "He is not here, He is risen." That's why Easter is the most exalted season of all the year. It symbolizes Nature at her best—her biggest step toward perfection. That's why every faithful Christ-like person rejoices in the message that it brings concerning the dear one who has answered the Call—"He is not here: for He is risen." And that's why, on the day I leave this earth, my friends and all the world can say, "He is not dead: for he is risen." Tell them:

*"I'll go laughing in my heart; I know  
There is no death, 'tis but phantom fear  
That leads the soul away from God.  
Christ lives, and round the living Christ new worlds  
Are born and live in light, new triumph songs  
Make music 'mid the silent stars, and swell  
Like ocean's thunder on a pounding shore,  
Life! Life Beyond! For Christ lives evermore!"*

Then let us all gird well our loins. And let us to our earthly task be true. Every day let us follow close to Him who holds in the hollow of His hand the secret glory of all our lives in God's great to-morrow. And let us so order all our words that they may be true, all our deeds that they may be kind, and all our thoughts that they may be pure. All along the way of earth wherever we may be, ere it be too late, let us scatter the blessed seed of loving service—"for our reaping bye and bye."

The secret meaning of the Future Life is an

Open Book to Him who said, "*I am the Resurrection and the Life.*" His face is transfigured with its glory. His garments glisten with its beauty. In the hollow of His hand He holds the Master Key to all its blessed mystery. And down through all the years He waits to share His Resurrection Life. With His Cup of Endless Life He waits to fulfill the immortality of all the human world. Fresh with the dew of love upon His hand, He waits to wipe away all tears, to bind up all aching hearts, and to bring all men into His Eternal Realm, where *life* is the *light of day*, and where *there is no death*. Hear then His silent call. Hear it from the deep in your own immortal breast. It is the call of the Resurrection and the Life hidden in every soul. Hear it, and, hearing, *follow* Him, "*whom to know is Life Eternal.*"

## V

### WINNING THE WAITING CROWN

*"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept my faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."*—II TIMOTHY 4:6-8.

THESE is a pathos in most parting words. Especially if they are the words of final parting. This is the final message of Paul to Timothy. The great apostle is white with age and toil and pain. He is in a lonely dungeon in Rome. His earthly work is done. His persecutions are nearing an end. The dew of death is gathering upon his brow. Soon he must lay down the tool of his life-work. Soon he must bid farewell to all the scenes of earth, especially to Timothy, his life's companion. Soon he must step out into the Great Beyond.

But he is ready. Like a good soldier, he is prepared to answer God's final call. And so he is not cast down. His hour of going out is at hand. It is all but here. So he whispers, "I am ready

to be offered and the time of my departure is come." Not the slightest fear. Not a sign of hesitation. With simple courage he faces the hidden inevitable future. And while his breath flickers, he toils on. The end to him is but a turn on the way. As calmly as he had all his life prepared for nightly sleep, so in his prison does he await the hour of his going.

History has oft repeated this quiet self-possession of the great apostle. Do you remember the instance of Captain Scott in the Antarctic solitudes? Death was close on his trail. The world was thrilled to know how he faced the end. "We did intend to finish ourselves when things proved like this, but," he continued, "we have decided to die naturally in the track." Noble heroism! It was in just this fine, undaunted spirit that most of the soldiers in the recent war faced the shadowed vale of death. But there is a tang about this declaration of Paul that mounts up above all other experiences of most men.

And so we are led to ask, what was the secret of the apostle's serene triumph in the hour of death? The answer is seen in the marvellous statement of our text.

Notice first, he does not seem to recognize death as the ages have looked upon it. To him it is but a "departure" from this earth. "The time of my *departure* is come," he says. How like the Master he was in this respect. You remember

Jesus never recognized any such thing as death. When He entered the room of the young woman, He said, "The maid is not dead." To Him death to the right-living was just going to the Father's house, to the place prepared for them. So was it to Paul. You recall that on another occasion, he said he desired "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." So, how little death is feared by those who like the apostle, see that

*"There is no death, what seems so is transition."*

What a victory instead of a misfortune. What a joy instead of a sorrow! Just a departure and not death at all. How often since Paul uttered those words in his serenity in the hour of death has the same triumph come to the disciples of Christ, down the centuries. I think of John Wesley. One day someone asked him what he would do, were he sure that the Lord would call him from earth that night? Mr. Wesley consulted his memorandum book. Then he declared he would carry out his duties as planned, retire and waken in the morning with the Lord.

But behind all this thought is the way by which we enter into the victory and the joy of it all. Paul tells us here. The first thing he says is a challenge to us all. "I have fought the good fight."

*After all life itself is largely a struggle.* Does not Job say that "Man that is born of woman is

of few days and full of trouble"? Life is such a fight against sorrow, sickness, pain, weakness, disappointment, failure, injustice, dishonour and doubt. It is a fight against the enemy within and without. Does not the poet murmur that

*"Life is full of farewell to the dying  
And mourning for the dead."*

Yes. But hear this old warrior. See him laying aside his weapons. See him ready for his reward. And there his younger comrade still in the thick of the fray. And now to this new leader comes the victory of the retiring commander—"I have fought the good fight." And bear in mind that Paul does not say, "I have *succeeded* in the fight." No. He simply declares, "I have *fought* the good fight." Note those three last words, "The good fight." And note especially the definite article "*the* good fight." For, life is really the good fight. It is the only fight worth struggling to win. And God does not judge the worth of the fight by its success or failure. Ah, no. You recall how Jesus rewarded the good steward by his "Well done, good and faithful servant." Not "good and *successful* servant," but "good and *faithful* servant." God doesn't ask us first, "Did you win?" No—but rather, "what kind of a fight did you put up?" Browning caught this great truth when he wrote:

*“When the fight begins within himself,  
A man’s worth something—  
Prolong that battle through this life!  
Never leave growing till the life to come.”*

Yes, life is, at its best, a fight. It is a struggle against upgrades and counter-currents. As Paul himself said, “When I would do good, evil is present.” Samuel Rutherford, that great saint of the centuries, once wrote to the Earl of Lothian, “Believe me, I find it hard wrestling to play fair with Christ and to maintain a course of communion with Him.” It takes the best we can do to win. We have to call into play every faculty and power we have. Yet, after all, God requires of us not that we shall surely win but that we surely fight. So, like the great apostle to the Gentiles, let us “put on the whole armour of God” and “fight the good fight.”

But further. The secret of Paul’s courage as he faced the Big Beyond was the kind of race he had run. Hear him—“I have finished the course.” Oh, what a thing to say! The Lord had set a course before him, and he finished it! No lagging by the way. And no stopping till he reached the goal. Like the Olympic runners, he saw stretching before him his ordered track, clear and well-defined. It was all marked out by the unseen hand of Him Whom he served. Think of his farewell message to the Ephesians as he went forth

into persecution: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus." And this was his "good fight"—that he "finish the course"—the task set before him.

Yes, Paul had his race to run and he ran it. So has each of us his race to run. And it is marked out before us by the same unseen hand that marked out that great apostolic runner long ago. Sometimes, the way is smooth, and sometimes it is rough. Sometimes it is straight, and sometimes it is crooked. Then let us run it so that whatever it be, we, too, can one day say, like Paul, "I have finished the course."

Don't be discouraged, if, at times, the way be dark. Just remember that it is "the way the Master trod." Keep before you the goal and the prize not far ahead. Study to know just the course the Lord has mapped out for you. Find it. Then strike out. And never stop till the race is won. From the very beginning "let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus."

Then think of the joy that is set before you, when your race is run. Eastertide brings it to our minds. How many have already run their course! Yes, how many since the last Eastertide! Their work was done, their tasks were finished. And

their race was at an end. And now the laurel of victory. Be cheered with the thought that the good of living is largely found in fighting the good fight and running the long course. And never falter till the last grade is made, till the last curve is rounded, and till the last yard is covered. Yes—

*"One step more, and the race is ended;  
One word more, and the lesson's done;  
One toil more, and a long rest follows  
At set of sun."*

But a third reason for this fine serenity of Paul in the face of death. He had never given up his religion—"I have kept the faith." Oh, how he had been tempted to give up his faith. What a lot of pain he would have avoided had he done so. But, 'mid all the heathen philosophy and anti-Christian teachings of his day he was never moved to give up the precious pearl which he "received of the Lord Jesus." Here was his watch-cry, "I determine to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified."

What is there in life more beautiful than love that stands loyal to the end. That was Paul. Through sunshine and shadow he stood loyal to his Master-Friend. No amount of prosperity or adversity allured him for a moment from his duty to his Redeemer. The gracious Gospel of Jesus he counted dearer than his very life.

And now standing on the verge of the Eternal

Future he can raise his right hand, place it upon his heart, and lifting his eyes toward heaven, he can say, "*I have kept the faith.*" Can we say this? Are we standing true to these great fundamentals on which Paul based his life on earth and his hope hereafter? Are we really *keeping* the faith? Like Paul, are we spelling it out in golden letters of Christian deeds as we "fight the good fight" and run the race of life? Are we standing four-square loyal to Christ? Does He fill our soul's horizon as He did Paul's? Like the apostle, as we are growing whiter with the years, are we growing closer to the Master-Lord? Are we clinging closer to the deeper truths of His blessed Good-Tidings? Is He gripping our thoughts and desires more tightly? Is He becoming more precious to us as the years hasten on? Does He seem to us more and more the world's One Great Hope? If so, we can say with Lucy Larcom:

*"Old—we are growing old;  
 Going up where the sunshine is clear;  
 Watching grander horizons appear  
 Out of clouds that enveloped our youth;  
 Standing firm on the mountains of truth;  
 Because of the glory the years unfold,  
 We are joyfully growing old."*

And now the reward of it all. "*Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at*

*that day; and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing.*” Here we have the climax of a faithful life on earth. Toil, pain, faithfulness, and after that a *crown*. That word “crown” holds within it “the unsearchable riches” of the world to come. Here it is the “crown,” not of gold or jewels, but “of righteousness.”—The crown of perfection. Every sin will be extinct, and the soul will be like Christ Himself. In another place, it is called “the crown of *life*”—the same crown. The fullness of life unending. Every faculty and quality of our being will be full-orbed. We’ll see as we are seen, and we’ll know as we are known. In another place it is called the “crown of *glory*”—the same crown—every toil and pain and sorrow of earth turned into “joy unspeakable and full of *glory*.”

This is the crown that Christ will share with us all who, like Paul, are ready for the Master, when He comes to take us to Himself. For, remember that, according to His promise, we are to sit with Him upon His throne. “Be thou faithful unto death,” said Jesus, “and I will give thee a crown of life.” Note He didn’t say, “Be thou clever and successful.” No—“Be thou *faithful*.” And how long? “Unto *death*.”

And *what are we going to do with this crown?* We’re going to wear it beside the King of kings, and rule with Him over empires of which this earth will be but a parish. For you recall His

promise, "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne."

Moreover, *it is there waiting for each of us.* "And not only to *me*, but also to all them that have loved His appearing." What appearing does he mean? It is perfectly clear. One day He told His disciples He was soon to leave them. And they were filled with sorrow. But at once He turned to them and said, "Let not your heart be troubled . . . I go to prepare a place for you, and . . . *I will come again* . . . and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also." There it is, "I will come again"—"His appearing" to take us to Himself. And as John says, "When He appears, we shall be like Him."

Now, those who "love His appearing" are to wear this crown. Who are they? Here is the picture of it. You remember the five wise virgins. They were ready and watching for the coming of the Bridegroom. They were filled with joy at the thought of His coming. And when He came they went out with lighted lamps to meet Him. But there was one who was not only ready for Him, and not only did she watch with joy for His coming. And when He came she *loved* His appearing. She was the Bride. But five were foolish. They were not ready for His coming. Their lamps were empty and untrimmed. And at the Bridegroom's

appearing they were filled with disappointment. They did not, they could not, "*love His appearing.*"

Are *we* ready for His coming? Are we so fighting the good fight, are we so running the race, are we so keeping the faith that when the Bridegroom comes for His Bride we shall actually "*love His appearing?*" Not long ago, I stood at the bedside of a young woman who, like Paul, was nearing the end of the way. Never shall I forget the ecstasy that suddenly filled her soul. In an instant her pain left her and her face became transfigured and uplifted. She was at once filled with joy inexpressible. Then stretching out her pale, limpid hand, she whispered, "Mother, I must go! I cannot stay! I see the Lord! He is calling me, and—and—I want to go to Him." And in an instant, she went out to receive her "crown of righteousness." She *loved* His appearing.

Yes, we wonder so much why we have to so fight our way through life. I well remember when but a wee lad, my dear mother helped me over a hard place in my childhood by telling me she had something hidden away for me, if I would be a good boy, be brave and do the very best I could. And so the Great Father-Lord calls us "little children" for such to Him we are. And He tells us that if we are brave and faithful and do our very best, He will give us a "crown" which He has "laid up" for us. We do not know just exactly what kind of crown it is. But we know its mate-

rial was melted somewhere down deep in the great loving heart of God. It was fashioned by His redeeming, perfecting hands. And we know it is "the crown of a good life," for that is the original meaning of the phrase "A crown of righteousness." The wearing of it will give us endless "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

But *when are we to receive the Crown?* Sometime in the dim, far-distant future? No—when Jesus comes to receive us unto Himself. "Which the Lord . . . shall give to me *at that day.*" What day? The day of "His appearing." The day when our fight is over and our course is finished and our task is done. Blessed day! Earth crowned with heaven; time crowned with eternity; sin crowned with holiness; sorrow crowned with joy; humanity crowned with divinity. Man's long watchful night crowned with God's cloudless, endless, Easter Morn.

*"And with the morn, those angel faces smile,  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."*

## VI

### SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER HEREAFTER?

*"Then shall I know, even as I also am known."*  
I CORINTHIANS 13:12.

**T**HERE are many questions that occupy the mind of man. But perhaps this is the most vital of all—Shall we know each other in the world to come? Shall we recognize each other as on earth? Shall we know each as the same personality? When the mists have rolled away, shall we know our neighbours, and, above all, the dear ones of our home?

All down the ages we have asked this question. But how we have looked in vain for an answer. Our deepest faculties, our keenest senses, all the universe itself, have failed to tell us a word. Nature has the habit of being so silent. The heavens and the deep places of the soul seem wrapped in silence. As one of our recent writers says, "It is not the noise of the rumbling daily world that maddens us. It is the maddening silence of life's deepest things."

But God has not left us without some finger-posts. Along life's way He points us to the Great

City of our Immortality. And He has left us finger-posts that point to the dawn of his Great To-morrow when we shall know each other, when we have crossed the sea of earthly life.

We see the primary law of demand and supply at work. Wherever the great Creator has planted a demand in the human being, sooner or later, and somewhere, He provides for it. We are hungry, and He provides us food. We are thirsty, and He provides us drink. We are tired, and He provides us rest. We are lonely, and He provides us friends. We thirst for the beautiful, and He provides us beauty. We long for harmony, and He provides us music. We long for truth, and He provides us knowledge. We long to do, and He gives us power. We long for peace, and He comforts us. And so is it with all our longings; He provides for each of them. So do we read, "Thou satisfiest the desire of every thing." Again, we hear the Psalmist sing, "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." And you recall the comforting words of David concerning his child—" *I shall go to him*, but he shall not return to me." And is it not most assuring when we hear Jesus say, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things; . . . and all these things shall be added unto you." As a father, how I should rejoice to meet the deepest need and longing of my child's yearning heart. Jesus knew this and said, "If ye

then . . . know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give." So we may rest assured that the Father of all yearning hearts will one day abundantly satisfy our thirst to know each other in the Great Beyond.

To the mind of Jesus there seemed to be no doubt about this question of questions. Yet He said so little about it. But that was because, to Him, it was an axiom. You know we spend little time explaining axioms; we just use them. And upon them we build the great superstructures of human life. But the Master does tell us some very cogent truths about our subject. You remember when He spoke to His disciples about leaving this earth, He turned and said, "Let not your heart be troubled," and then a moment later he said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Could you imagine Him preparing a place where his followers never know Him or their loved ones. Then, in the next sentence He said, "I will come again and *receive you unto Myself.*" There you have it. One day He called His disciples His "*friends,*" and now He is to *receive his friends* "unto Himself." And, in the very next breath, He said, "*That where I am, there ye may be also.*" No language could be simpler, clearer and more direct. Here He declares His "*friends*" will be with Him in the "*Father's House.*" Surely we should need

no further evidence that we shall know each other in the great Hereafter.

And yet, we have a still further message from the blessed Lord of heaven and earth. For you will recall those memorable words of His to the centurion whose servant He healed. His heart was deeply moved with the centurion's faith, and it seemed to Him to be the very gateway of heaven. And so He uttered these pregnant words, "*I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.*" There they are, grandfather, father and grandson, sitting down together in the kingdom of heaven. Not only do they know each other, but also they know each other as they are known. I think they know each other as the angels and the archangels know them. I think they know each other in very truth as God knows them. For you know Paul declared that our knowledge here was like seeing "through a glass darkly." But he goes on to say that then we shall see "face to face," . . . "then shall I know, even as also I am known." There will be no cloud of sin or darkness to intercept our knowledge. We shall see each other as we really are. Our knowledge of each other shall be as clear as the light of heaven. From what Christ says, and from what Paul says, and from what the Sacred Word throughout says,

*"We shall know each other better,  
When the mists have rolled away."*

And, if Abraham knows Isaac, and Isaac knows Jacob in the Realm Beyond, so will Abraham know his beloved Sarah, and Isaac his Rebecca, and Jacob his Rachael. So will Isaac know Esau, and so will Jacob know Joseph and Benjamin and all his other children. Why not?

Let us go back to the human soul again. Let us look for a moment at the quenchless thirst in every heart to some day meet again the dear ones who have gone before, and then ask ourselves the question of common reason—how could we imagine the great Father Heart of Love that would forever fail to satisfy this thirst? This longing of the soul is a gap in the great cosmic universe within the soul of man. And only immortality and recognition hereafter will fill the vacant place. Science has made its progress on the basis of the hypothesis that where there is a need there is, somewhere, somehow, something that will meet that need. So have our great discoveries and inventions been made. For example, for many years a gap in the heavens was observed. Disturbances occurred regularly every seventy-five years. It was assumed that some heavenly body every three-quarters of a century visited that part. After much observation, Halley discerned the comet that is called by his name. This explained the gap. So,

in the firmament of the soul when bereavement comes, there is a gap which can be filled only by the clear-cut faith that some day, somewhere we shall meet and know each other again.

All peoples from the prehistoric past to the present have believed that we shall meet again. When the ancient savages buried their friends, they heard a voice from the deep of their breasts saying, "We shall meet again." And so their religions worked out this belief with clarity and precision. We have only to think of the primitive Babylonians, Egyptians and Indians. And all up through the ages from the days of Paul to the present time we find the world's leaders confident of it. I think of the long list of modern leaders who held this belief very dear to their hearts. Among these are Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace, John Fiske, Michael Faraday, Henry George, Sir William Osler, Rudolph Eucken, Victor Hugo, and John Henry Jowett. Each of these was a world leader.

Abraham Lincoln was America's typical citizen. Read what he wrote when his father was nearing the Other Shore: "I sincerely hope that my father may yet recover his health, but at all events, tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our Great and Good Merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. . . . Say to him that, if we could meet now, it is doubtful whether it would not be more painful than pleas-

ant; but that, if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with the many loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the help of God, hope ere long to join them." Hear the English poet-laureate as he chants to the memory of his beloved Arthur Hallam:

*"And I shall know him when we meet;  
And we shall sit at endless feast,  
Enjoying each the other's good."*

No American poet ever reached greater heights than did Longfellow. Read again his lament to the memory of his young daughter:

*"Not as a child shall we again behold her;  
For when with raptures wild  
In our embrace we again enfold her,  
She will not be a child.  
But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,  
Clothed with celestial grace;  
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion  
Shall we behold her face."*

Have you ever thought of how the story of the raising of Lazarus bears upon this question before us? When Jesus was about to raise Lazarus from the dead, He made the significant statement, "*Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may wake him out of his sleep.*" You will observe that to the Lord he was still *Lazarus*. He bore the same name and he was still *His friend*. And, notice

still further, he was still not only the friend of Jesus, but the friend of others; for Jesus said "*our* friend Lazarus." So we discern here three points about Lazarus while he was beyond the portals of this life; (1) he preserved his identity; (2) he continued to be a particular personal friend; (3) he was still the friend of the friends he had left behind.

So it is only one step to see that the dear one of yours to whom you said a sad farewell still has his identity, is still your *friend* and is still the friend of all the friends he left behind.

And then note, still further, that when Lazarus met his friends again he was still their friend *as of old*. The same old love burned brightly on the altar of all their hearts. He was still Lazarus, the brother, and they were still Mary and Martha, his sisters, and Jesus, his closest of all friends. It is therefore easy to see that when we unite again with those who have gone before, we shall still be friends bound together in the great bundle of love that made our fellowship on earth so precious.

There is also another very significant statement of Jesus. You recall the day He went into the room where the young maiden lay, in what the ages have called death. Friends were in mourning. Hearts were in anguish. But hear the Master of life and death utter these immortal words, "*She is not dead.*" Jesus never recognized death. He knew that what men called death was but an-

other name for a higher and realer life. He knew it was but the door through which we pass into the perfection of all earth's relationships. He knew that it meant the perfecting of these personal fellowships begun this side of heaven. Then, if in death men do not die, neither shall die these personal relationships that make our life on earth so dear. Edward Bulwer-Lytton caught the regnant fact that what we call death is but the rising of the eternal sun upon the night of time. He saw with the Christ-mind that death is the larger life, the clearer vision, the higher altitude, the deeper reach and the final sense of all the ties lived out on earth. This is his song:

*"There is no death! The stars go down  
To rise upon some other shore,  
And bright in heaven's jewelled crown  
They shine forevermore.*

*There is no death! The forest leaves  
Convert to life the viewless air;  
The rocks disorganize to feed  
The hungry moss they bear.*

*There is no death! The dust we tread  
Shall change, beneath the summer showers,  
To golden grain, or mellow fruit,  
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.*

*And ever near us though unseen,  
The dear immortal spirits tread,  
For all the boundless universe  
Is life—'There are no dead.'"*

Death is so often called a *sleep*. The Greeks used to call it such, and you remember how Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*." What a beautiful figure this is! Just a little closing of the eyes, a little shutting of the lips and a little folding of the hands. And then the great awakening in "The Father's House." And you remember how the Psalmist said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness." Satisfied! Just think of it—*satisfied*! After all the night of mourning—*satisfied*. That means that to those who set out upon the long, long journey we say but "good night" and in "a little while" "good morning." I like the way Mrs. Barbauld puts it:

*"Life! we've been long together  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;  
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,—  
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away, give little warning,  
Choose thine own time;  
Say not 'Good Night,' but in some brighter clime  
Bid me 'Good Morning.'"*

I think, too, that Ella Wheeler Wilcox was thinking out this thought when she wrote:

*"I cannot make it seem a day to dread,  
When from this dear earth I shall journey out  
To that still dearer country of the dead,  
And join the lost ones so long dreamed about.  
I love this world, yet shall I love to go  
And meet the friends who wait for me, I know."*

Once more. Have you ever thought of *this old world* as the *Father's Mansion*, in which are many *rooms*? We are told that there is at least two billion stars, and that each of these is likely a world. Then, oh, how many rooms there are in the Father's House! And it seems to me that death is just the going out from one of God's rooms into another. So, separated by death, we are but each in his room, though we cannot see each other, nor can we hear each other's voice. It was this that the Master meant when He said, "*I go to prepare a place for you.*" And so all down the ages He has been preparing for His children each his room. And "in a little while" He will call us from this earthly room to His Higher Room. Then shall we all dwell together in the place from which we shall never part. As Robert Freeman sings:

*"No, not cold beneath the grasses,  
Not close-walled within the tomb;  
Rather, in our Father's mansion,  
Living in another room.*

*Living, like the man who loves me,  
Like my child with cheeks abloom,  
Out of sight, at desk or school-book,  
Busy in another room.*

*Nearer than my son whom fortune  
Beckons where the strange lands loom;  
Just behind the hanging curtain,  
Serving in another room.*

*Shall I doubt my Father's mercy?  
Shall I think of death as doom,  
Or the stepping o'er the threshold  
To a bigger, brighter room?*

*Shall I blame my Father's wisdom?  
Shall I sit enswathed in gloom,  
When I know my loves are happy—  
Waiting, in another room?"*

Then with this hallowed sleep, let us chase away the cloud of sorrow. Let us see the sun of a better day rising beyond the hills of Time. Let us behold our loved ones in the joy of their new abode. And then lift the curtain a little higher and behold the Blessed Morning when once again we shall see them "face to face." When in each other's arms our cup of joy will forever overflow. Then shall we be rewarded a million times for all the tears and pains of this present hour. Then shall we know each other as we are known, and then shall we see the clear crystal deep of each other's love and worth. I think I hear our dear ones call to us from the Other Shore: "If you but knew as we now know the blessing of the hour that men call death, you would wipe away your tear and your sorrow would be gone." I think they would add to this: "if you but knew the love of God as we now know it, you would see that He knows best, and you would leave it all with Him, and that would bring you the peace you so much

long to have.” It was surely this that Robert Browning had in mind when with these lines he gave back to God his faithful wife:

“*Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again  
And with God be the rest!*”

But to enjoy these blessings of the Vast Beyond, what duty is laid upon us here? Surely there is something we must do? We must not sit idly by and wait. Ours must be the lighted lamp and the girded loin. There is a *way* of love and right in which we must direct our steps. We must walk according to the degree of *truth* we know. We must live the life of loyal *service* to God and all mankind. But how can we know the way we should tread, the truth we should follow and the life we should pursue, so that at the end of the journey of Time we may justly claim the blessings of God's Great To-morrow? A searching question! What is the answer? Only One ever answered it. And He said, “Follow Me”—for “*I* am the *Way* to walk, the *Truth* to follow, the *Life* to live.” *He* has the keys—follow Him! *He* holds the secret—follow Him! Time and Eternity are in *His* hands—close in upon Him. The finalities of all the world are *His*—grip His hand. The priceless rewards that follow death belong to *Him*—serve Him day and night.

Then soon in the arms of dear ones long since

gone before, you will behold the tragic error of human hearts all down the ages. You will then discover that the sorrows of death are in disguise our greatest joys. You will then find that these rending losses are our unsearchable gains. Yes, you will then behold the biggest fact of all the universe, which, if we could now but grasp, would in an hour transform this sad old earth into a *sunlit heaven*. You will then learn the blest eternal truth, beneath all truth that—*There Is No Death*.

*" Oh, greater truth no man has said,  
' There is no death, there are no dead.'*

. . . . .  
*It brings before the eyes of faith  
Those realms of radiance, tier on tier,  
Where our beloved ' dead ' appear,  
More beautiful because of ' death.'  
It speaks to grief: ' Be comforted;  
There is no death, there are no dead.' "*

## VII

### COMFORT IN THE HOUR OF DEATH

*"Let not your heart be troubled."*—JOHN  
14: 1.

**A**S there can be no picture without a background, so these words of Jesus can be understood only in the light of their background. The Master and His disciples had been in the closest of friendship. Their hearts were bound together in the sweet unity of love. They had hung upon His words. They had leaned upon His breast. Their hearts had burned within them as they walked and talked with Him. They had grown to love Him more than brother or sister, husband or wife.

Mid the warm glow of this loving devotion of His disciples, Jesus one day rose and, with all the tenderness of heaven, uttered one sentence that turned their day into night, and plunged them into the darkness of despair. It was a bolt from the clear blue. Sorrow filled their hearts. Hope fled to the winds. It seemed to them the end of all things had come. There was little left for which to live. Life's bubble had burst and nothing worth while remained. The sun seemed no more

to rise, and clouds filled the air. Life's silver cord was loosed, its golden bowl was broken, its pitcher was broken at the fountain, and its wheel was broken at the cistern. And, like the Preacher of old, they exclaimed in their hearts, "Vanity of vanities." And why all this?

The answer is found in the sentence Jesus uttered. It was a death sentence. He had just told them He would send them the Comforter, the Helper, the Teacher, who would tell them the meaning of all He had said and done. And then fell the words of sorrow. Hear them as I speak them in tones subdued, "But now I go My way to Him that sent Me; it is expedient for you that I go away." What does He mean? What *can* He mean? "What is this that He saith unto us?" said some of His disciples. Surely He is not speaking of death? Yes, He is, for in plain language He added, "A little while, and ye shall not see Me . . ., because I go to the Father."

Now it is plain to them. The awful fact of death is upon them. They must give up from earth the very heart of their lives. They must surrender their dearest friend in the world. Sorrow overwhelms them.

It would seem that in such an hour, there was no comfort to be found. And surely, if ever the human soul is filled with trouble and pain, it is when the treasure of the heart is taken away. Yet it was in this very hour when, having made the

announcement of His death, and, seeing the sorrow that filled His disciples' heart, He said, "*Let not your heart be troubled.*"

Why then did the Master make such a request at such an hour? It seems so unnatural. For surely our hearts will always be troubled when death enters our door. Yet He said it. More than that, note the meaning of that word "troubled." Haven't you noticed when you threw a pebble into the calm water how the ripple went out in ever enlarging circles? What happened? We say the water was "troubled." So said Jesus, "Let there not be a 'ripple' in your hearts, even in this hour of my approaching death." It seems impossible. And yet He who stilled the waves and raised the dead said it. There must have been a good reason for His saying it. He surely must have known it was possible to be untroubled even in the hour of death.

So we enquire why He said those words. And our answer is the comfort of the text. First of all, keep in mind Him who said the words. It was He who had brought sight to the blind and life to the dead; He therefore "spoke as one having authority."

Jesus knew the meaning of it all. He saw the pearl within the shell, though hidden to the eye of men. He saw the vaster life beyond the gates of what we call death. He saw the blessed purpose of His going away. Could we but see the

meaning of it all, as He saw it, our hearts in the valley of death would remain untroubled.

Jesus saw there was no such thing as death. Once when He was ushered into the room where lay the lifeless body of a young maiden, He quietly said, "She is not dead." Later, it is said of the Apostle Paul, who knew the mind of Jesus better than any other man that ever lived, that He did not speak of dying, but that he desired to "depart, and be with Christ." Indeed that is just how death appeared to the Master; just taking final leave of this earth to live in the immediate presence of God.

Surely it would be the greatest possible blessing to us, could we grasp in faith the importance of this fact that men never die. Science is pointing its finger in this direction more and more every day. It tells us these bodies of ours are entirely changed every six or seven years. Then some of us have lived in five different bodies, some in six and some in ten. We remember the same self living in them all. And one day the last body will not grow a new body, and bit by bit the walls will crumble, till finally we'll each move out into a new body prepared for us. For you remember the apostle telling us that "if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

Some one has said there are few vacant houses in Buffalo. The other day I asked an official of

the Forest Lawn Cemetery how many were buried there. He answered, "About fifty thousand." Then there are at least fifty thousand vacant houses in our fair city. And yet we will go on saying this one and that one are buried in the cemetery. Never! How gross, how unfair and how undignified to speak of our dear ones lying in the ground, when long ago they moved out of the old house into a new and better one. When shall we discern between the dwelling and the dweller? When shall we see as Oliver Wendell Holmes saw? At eighty-six he was met one morning by a friend who said, "Good morning, Dr. Holmes, how are you to-day?" He replied: "Thank you, my house is tottering, but I am very well myself."

No, Jesus did not recognize death. He saw that men, made in the eternal image of God, do not, cannot, die. They are made out of the imperishable substance of God Himself. For, remember it was God's breath breathed into man that made man a living soul. And God's breath is immortal. This was as plain to Jesus as the light of the rising sun.

And yet men for ages had not seen this fact of our immortality. They had long since failed to discriminate between the soul and the body. Theirs was a pagan conception. Soon it crept into the early Christian Church. And it is only slowly breaking upon the Church now that all these centuries it has been pagan in its idea of

death. When shall we get away entirely from such remnants of heathendom that keep us still in the sorrow of what we think is death, when all the while God intends us to know *there is no death*?

To gain this untroubled heart in the sorrow of death, Jesus calls us back to our faith in God. "Let not your heart be troubled," He says, "*ye believe in God.*" Here it is—the old unshaken implicit trust in God. With all our modern discoveries, great as they are, we rest our hope on the unchanging love of God.

Surely, if there is ever an hour when men need faith in God it is in the hour of death. And here we are using the word "death" again. When will someone rise and give us another word that will mean just what Christ meant when He used the word? Till then we must go on using the old term. It is in such an hour we specially need to lean upon God. It is then we cry unto Him, whether we have not done so in the past score of years. For there seems no other help for our stricken hearts. So, if a man's religion is worth anything to him, it will show itself in that dark hour. You may think you are an atheist. But wait till you stand by the new-made grave of some precious one, and you'll find there are depths in you that will scorn your puny doubts, and you will turn to God who made you. So I say, when comes the hour of death, lean hard on God, place

your weak child-hand in His strong Father-hand, and let Him lift you up and kiss you into peace.

And don't forget who and what God is. There have been so many different ideas about God. And some of these thoughts about Him have been of little comfort in sorrow. For example, how little it comforts us to think that God is a mighty Creator, or King or Judge. A few centuries ago our fathers looked for the best name for the Deity. So they examined their dictionaries and records old and new. At last they fell upon the word *god*, an old word for "good." So, were we looking as they were, we would call Him *Good*. It seems to be the very essence of His being. It gathers up all that is strong and loving, noble and beautiful, and crystallizes it into one word. You believe that God is good. You remember that when He made the world, He saw it was *good*. Why? Because the stamp of His goodness was upon it. And every moment since, He has shown us His goodness. The Psalmist saw it and chanted, "Praise the Lord, for He is good." In goodness He brought us into the world: in goodness He has kept us: in goodness He has redeemed us: in goodness He binds us together in love: and in the same goodness He in His own time separates us in death for "a little while." So, let us trust His goodness in death as we have in life. If we do, there will continue to come to us the blessing of

the words of Jesus when He said, "Let not your heart be troubled."

The heart of God always goes out toward us in goodness. He only waits our willingness to receive it. But, alas, how often we permit a barrier to stand in the way. We press a button, and the light shines and the wheels turn. What has happened? Contact has taken place between the transmitter and the receiver. But one day we press the button and there is neither light nor power. Why? Something foreign to man and to electricity has gotten in. The transmitter could not transmit its blessing of light and power. Just exactly so it is with the goodness of God. Something from the beginning of human history has gotten in between God and us. Somehow in its essence it is foreign to the real nature of us all. It prevents God from transmitting to us the blessings of His goodness. It is generally called sin; some call it error. It matters not what you call it. Nor does it matter how it got there; the important thing is it must be removed. There is no use trying to do anything else than to remove it.

I once attended an entertainment at which a man performed with a reptile. He did it with perfect ease. At the close I asked him why he had no fear? Had he trained it? No. Had he regulated it? No. He had taken the fang out of it. There was no other way of safety. So we hear the prophets, teachers, priests, philosophers and

reformers trying, each in his own way, to overcome the evil that so separates the goodness of God from man. And remember that all the while God is really never separated from man. The father never was really separated from the prodigal son. He followed his son in his inmost heart to the very swine he fed. But his robe, his ring, his fatted calf and all the other blessings of his house were separated from his son. The gap of waywardness was between them. So, I hear John saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." He removes the fang of sin. And now with this foreign evil substance removed, we are brought into full communion with God. And immediately the blessings of his goodness flow down into our hearts. And with it comes "the peace of God that passeth understanding." That's why Jesus said, "*believe also in Me.*"

Another reason why Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled" is found in the nature of His departure. You know how ready true love is to sacrifice for the good and happiness of those whom it loves. Soon their beloved Jesus was to be in paradise: "to-day, shall thou be with me in paradise"; "I go to the Father," He declared.

And so it is with our dear ones when they leave us in death. They go into the Father's home: "In My Father's house are many mansions." Think of it: going out into the presence of the Father from whose loins we have all come and

whose spiritual blood flows eternally in our veins. Into his palace we go. Why? Because we are regally made. Imperial glory is stamped upon our inmost souls. No less a place would meet the splendour of our royal nature.

Yes—The Father's House! that means we shall return unto Him from whom we came. We shall return unto the old homestead of the soul. Have you not felt the thrill of joy as you returned from time to time to your father's home, the place of your childhood? The old gate, the old path, the old home, the old orchard, the old barn, the old winding stream. A hundred sensations of youthful days surged through your veins. Magnify this thought a million times and catch some glimpse of the joy unspeakable that must fill the soul as it wings its trackless flight into its Father's home. The dew of eternal youth will rest forever upon our brow. Jesus saw all this and so in the hour of death He said, "Let not your heart be troubled."

And now think what kind of a place is the Father's Home. Years ago when I was a college student, once a year I took a long trip to my mother's home. What, if there had been no order in that home when I reached it. It would not have been home. But there it was, everything set in order, everything fully prepared. There was my prepared place at the prepared table and my prepared bed in the prepared room, even the clothes turned down and just the kind of pillow

I used in childhood days. That was a bit of real heaven to me once a year at least. So, said Jesus, "if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more your Heavenly Father." There it is—the Father's House prepared by His loving hand for each of His children! Everything set in order so that it will absolutely meet our peculiar need. Think for a moment how God has prepared the starry heavens, the bounteous earth, the beautiful flower and the wondrous body with its keen sense of sight and sound, and the mind with its ten thousand sweet exalted thoughts. When I think of all His preparation through the timeless ages in sky and land and sea, my heart leaps in a rapture at the thought of how infinitely blessed will be the place "prepared" for us. That's what Jesus had in mind when He said, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven," and, a little later, "Let not your heart be troubled."

With velvet foot the risen Lord will come for us. He will not send some retinue to take us to the prepared rooms in the father's House. Nor will He send an archangel. No, He will come Himself. "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." Each of us in his own time will hear His call. "My sheep know My voice." And we'll answer each to his call. No one else will hear it. Many times at the deathbed have the dying told me they heard the Master call. Not

long ago a man of forty-five when nearing the end whispered to me, "I see Jesus coming for me." A little later a young woman nearing the brink turned to her mother and said in my hearing, "Mother, dear, I must go, for I hear Jesus calling me." With deep unspeakable peace she stretched forth her hands to go. In a few moments the unseen Saviour received both these friends into His arms, and they went forth with Him. And, as He carried them away, I could hear Him whisper, "Let not your heart be troubled . . . for where I am there shall ye be also." And they were filled with "joy unspeakable." I think I hear them singing, "Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

All down the ages men have asked the ever-living question, What is heaven? And no one has ever answered it. Not even did Jesus try to answer it. But what difference does it make where it is. For, after all, it is not so much a matter of place. Thousands in the most beautiful places on earth have been in very hades. And thousands in the most unsightly places have been in the very shades of heaven.

The true answer is found in the word *companionship*. Where is your real home? Is it somewhere in Buffalo; on some street, in some house? No, it really is not *here* or *there*. It is an experience of the soul: it is a companionship born out of love. It is the communion of heart and heart,

between you and the dear ones of your family. That's home. It is not a place so much as a companionship of loved ones. So it is with heaven. It's not just a place amid the planets or the stars. No. It is a companionship of the soul. It will be companionship with Abraham and Moses and Paul and above all these with our dear departed ones. But, it is chiefly an ever-blessed fellowship with Him who has redeemed us unto Himself. "So shall we ever be with the Lord."

Yes, "Where I am there shall ye be also." "Where I am!" Just stop for one moment and think of this. "In the Father's House where I am. At the Father's right hand where I am, sharing with Me the government of the world." Think of it, "joint-heirs with Christ." "Kings and priests unto him," ruling with Him over empires of which these United States will be but as a parish. Then "let not your heart be troubled."

We have often wondered what kind of bodies we shall have after death. Many have been the theories. Will whole or part of these present bodies survive? Will they be material or spiritual? After all, it matters little what the answer, for all such answers are overshadowed by the blessed message of the apostle that he "will fashion these bodies like unto his glorious body." Think of it a body like the Lord's—a body with no taint of sin; a body clothed in the beauty of holiness; a body transformed into the glory of

heaven. Then what does it matter what kind of bodies we have after death, so long as they are like His? That means no more sickness or pain or weakness of any kind. Yes, we shall see the King in His beauty and we shall be beautiful like Him. Surely to think that we shall enter into such a glorious body should keep our hearts untroubled in the hour of death.

But there is still a higher reason why our hearts should be at peace when the shadows of death gather about us. For when we step out into the Great Beyond, we shall rise to heights of which our present life is but a shadow. We shall rise to vaster heights than ever man attained on earth. We'll soar higher than the best of saints that ever graced this world. Higher than the world's greatest prophets, kings and saints. Yes, we shall rise higher than the angels of heaven. We shall be like Himself—our Lord and King. "For it does not yet appear what we shall be," declares the apostle, "but we know that when he shall be manifest, *we shall be like Him.*"

Think of it!—"like Him." "Like Him" in perfect balance of character; "like Him" in absolute purity of soul; "like Him" full of grace and truth; "like Him" the one "altogether lovely"; "like Him" the bright and morning star; "like Him" without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; "like Him" whose "countenance is as the sun shineth in His strength." It staggers, it over-

whelms, one to contemplate it. No wonder as the climax of all this the Psalmist should sing, “I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness.”

Yes, if we but knew the meaning of the hour of death as Christ knew it when He uttered the words of our text, death would lose its sting and we would go forth with “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Indeed, I venture to say, could we for one moment catch a glimpse of the full-orbed blessing of what we call death, we could not survive the view. It would completely overwhelm us. All earthly life would lose its worth and we should be utterly dissatisfied and discontent. Yes—

*“If you but knew,  
Dear heart, the final aim of all your pain,  
The sorrow that hath filled your soul,  
Just why it came and what its goal,  
'Mid all your years, you would have no more tears,  
For you would see God's plan of love.”*

If you but knew, dear heart of sorrow, if you but really knew “*God's plan of love*,” then yours would be “*the untroubled heart*.” To you would come at once the joy—the joy unspeakable—that after all—*there is no death*. Then, till the curtain lifts, trust well the Great Christ Heart of all the world. Hear him whisper to you, as long ago he did to his sorrowing friends, “let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.”

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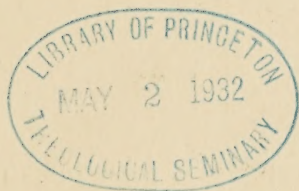
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